



Doncaster

Thursday 11 September

Going Update:

The going at Doncaster continues to dry up, with the times yesterday reflecting this. The ground could be on the quicker side of good by the end of the week.

Form Data

Richard Fahey does well at this meeting and having won the opening fillies' nursery two years ago he tries again with top-weight Home Cummins and Bimbo (1.40). Messrs Meehan, Stoute and Haggas have sent out winners of the Sceptre Stakes in the last ten years and each of them is represented again with J Wonder, Token Of Love and the favourite Bragging (2.10). The immensely valuable sales race went to 100/1 chance Morning Post last year, trained by Kevin Ryan. The trainer is

represented this time by Gaudy. Richard Fahey won the race in 2010 with Wootton Bassett and this year saddles almost a third of the field – seven of the 22 challengers. Brian Meehan, who runs Fox Trotter, won it in 2005. Charles Hills, who has Commemorative, and Peter Chapple-Hyam, with Sociopath, are the trainers to note in the 1m maiden (5.00). David Barron has Mississippi with a chance in the last (5.35).

Assessment

This second day of the St Leger meeting, with mainly large fields on a card dominated by fillies' races, is particularly challenging. This is the time of year when fillies and mares start to go in their coats, which can lead to a sudden loss of form.

1.40: The day opens with a proper teaser, where the favourite is Vesnina, who is 9lb 'well in' but has a low draw to contend with (high numbers generally favoured here in big fields on the straight course). Gregoria, also drawn low, is fancied in a race best swerved for betting purposes.

2.10: Another tricky race, with in-form Bragging attracting strong support

(3.55 Betfair). Amazing Maria (29) is back down to a suitable trip on her favoured ground while J Wonder comes here on the back of her best form last time at Goodwood. Token Of Love, twice a winner over a mile, is sure to be prominent while Kiyoshi, with cheekpieces for the first time, takes a drop in grade. There are others with chances in another race best watched.

2.40: Seal Of Approval, who looked a little moody last time at Newbury, and Arabian Comet, who just failed to beat her stable-companion Queen Of Ice in a Listed race at York, head the market. This is the former's time of year.

Venus De Milo has tackled Group 1 company but was tailed off last time. Melrose Abbey may prefer softer ground. The one to watch here is Silk Sari. Luca Cumani's daughter of Dalakhani is rated 10lb behind Seal Of Approval but she finished ahead of that filly two outings ago at Haydock and has since won a Listed race in game style at Newbury. She is progressing and at around 11.5 on Betfair offers each-way value. Her trainer is hopeful of a good run.

3.15: A nightmare contest, with a possible bias towards horses drawn high. Fox Trotter, trained by Brian Meehan (won this in 2003 and 2005) has the look of a horse that has been saved for this since running fourth in the Richmond. His earlier form with Burnt Sugar also reads well. Lexington Times has the experience to run well from a high draw. The Great War works better at home than we have seen from him on the track. Bond's Girl is the pick of the outsiders. No strong view.

3.45 & 4.25: No strong view in either of these.

5.00: Commemorative sets the level but is not certain to be suited by the step up to a mile. The best news is for newcomer Decorated Knight, a son of Galileo and the first foal of a full sister to the top-class Giant's Causeway. Roger Varian seldom has his horses tuned up for their first run, but I am told he rates this colt one of his best long-term prospects, so watch him closely with a view to the future. Of the others Erik The Red, who was keeping on at York, has come on from the race. Mohatem and Sociopath are others to note.

5.35: Another race best watched.

Selections

This is a very challenging day. Silk Sari may be the value as she is improving and should appreciate the step up in trip (2.40). Seal Of Approval, who peaks in the autumn, is the one to beat. Keep an eye on Decorative Knight for the long term (5.00).

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